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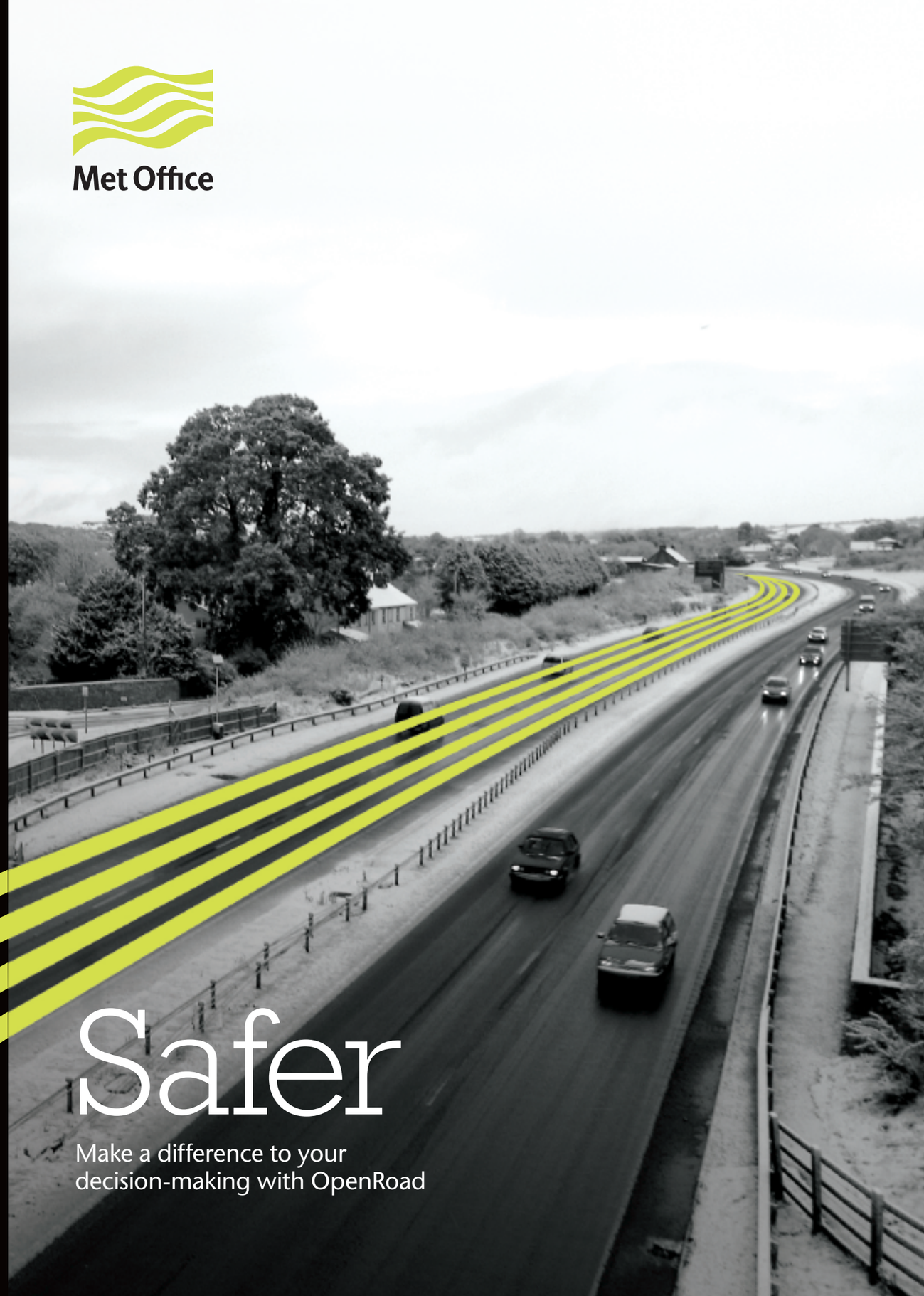


Safer

Make a difference to your decision-making with OpenRoad

The UK experiences some of the most variable weather in the world

In summer or winter, this can create dangerous conditions – especially on the roads. At the Met Office, we've been forecasting the weather for over 150 years. We can help you make informed decisions to reduce its impact, so that your roads flow freely and safely all year round.

OpenRoad provides you with the critical weather information you need in this ever-changing environment. It has led the market for more than 20 years with services designed to meet the modern challenges of highway maintenance. It can also help you manage your resources more effectively.

We understand that safety is your number one priority

We also know that you're under increasing pressure to be fully prepared for whatever the weather has in store and keep delays to a minimum, while seeking the best value for money.

Making confident decisions about whether or not to grit roads on marginal nights and coping with public scrutiny and the threat of litigation is stressful. That's why we're committed to delivering the best quality weather forecasts and support to help you achieve your objectives.

We're working with our road customers more closely than ever before through steering groups, research surveys, product trials and one to one meetings, to understand how you individually operate and the unique challenges you face. This collaborative approach ensures our solutions are tailored to your needs and encourages two-way thinking about how our road forecasts might develop in future.

Met Office forecasters are renowned for their expertise

They're also trained to the highest standards and set the bar for other weather providers. In addition, they add value to your forecast with their localised knowledge, close working relationships with our customers and vigorous quality controls.

Speak with one of our OpenRoad forecasters who will be familiar with your region and your most recent forecast. Available for friendly, expert guidance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year they can help you reach a confident decision about what action to take.

What's more, our OpenRoad forecasters constantly monitor your forecasts to enhance quality and provide valuable insight into developing weather situations.

We pride ourselves on our ISO9000 accreditation that ensures the highest possible quality in everything we do. We regularly outperform industry targets for accuracy but strive to improve the way we verify our performance to ensure it is meaningful to you.

We're continuously enhancing our unique weather modelling techniques and forecasting skills

We've recently introduced a new weather forecasting model for the UK which offers the highest ever resolution with grid points only 4 kilometres apart (instead of the 12 kilometres used previously). This already enables us to forecast in much greater detail the effects of hills and urban areas, the movement of showers across the country and cloud cover. The planned move to a 1.5 kilometre resolution model in 2009, thanks to greater supercomputing power at the Met Office, promises to deliver even greater forecast accuracy.

At the same time, advances in our specialised road model and forecasts have improved the way we represent complicated local effects across your road network. These include cold air pooling in small dips and valleys, shading and obstructed skyview — all of which have a significant impact on accurately predicting road surface temperature.

Innovative developments in route based forecasting provide valuable detail along each route that can benefit all of our customers.

"Accurate forecasts from the Met Office enable us to make the best possible judgements regarding treatment of our roads. The forecasters at the other end of the phone are always helpful and available when we need to talk to them."

Peter Lott
Community Delivery Team Leader
Kent County Council

We offer year-round services to meet your needs

Whatever your approach to managing your operations – by site, area, domain or route – OpenRoad can help you achieve your objectives. Available throughout the year, our services can be delivered in a way that suits you – by email, fax or password-protected website.

NEXT GENERATION WEB AND ROUTE BASED FORECASTING

Our new web service has been designed with clarity and flexibility in mind, using the very latest technology. We've enhanced its power as a decision-making tool without overloading you with data.

Simply choose a subscription level to match your needs – based on area forecasts or new route based forecasts.

Clean, intuitive visualisation means you can find information easily and make faster decisions. A new summary page helps you to quickly identify any hazards across your network, by site or by route.

You can then zoom in to see the detail for your region hour by hour, overlaying weather animations and monitoring sensor observations. Other key benefits include the ability to:

- monitor your areas and routes using detailed segment graphs or written summaries;
- build up a picture of the weather on your map using selectable layers;
- see the same high resolution radar and satellite imagery as your forecaster;
- view a level of detail relevant to you with interactive displays;
- plan further ahead with up to a 36-hour forecast, now updated every 6 hours; and
- access key information easily with enhanced speed and resilience.

TEXT AND GRAPHS

Text forecasts and graphs provide essential information on road surface and air temperatures, hazards, dew point, road state, precipitation type, wind and cloud cover.

Our comprehensive service includes a detailed 24-hour forecast; a 2–5 day forecast for planning ahead; a morning summary and evening update; and site-specific graphs showing an hourly breakdown of the weather expected. Forecasters monitor your forecast to ensure you are alerted as early as possible to any changes in the weather that may affect your plans.

TELEPHONE CONSULTANCY

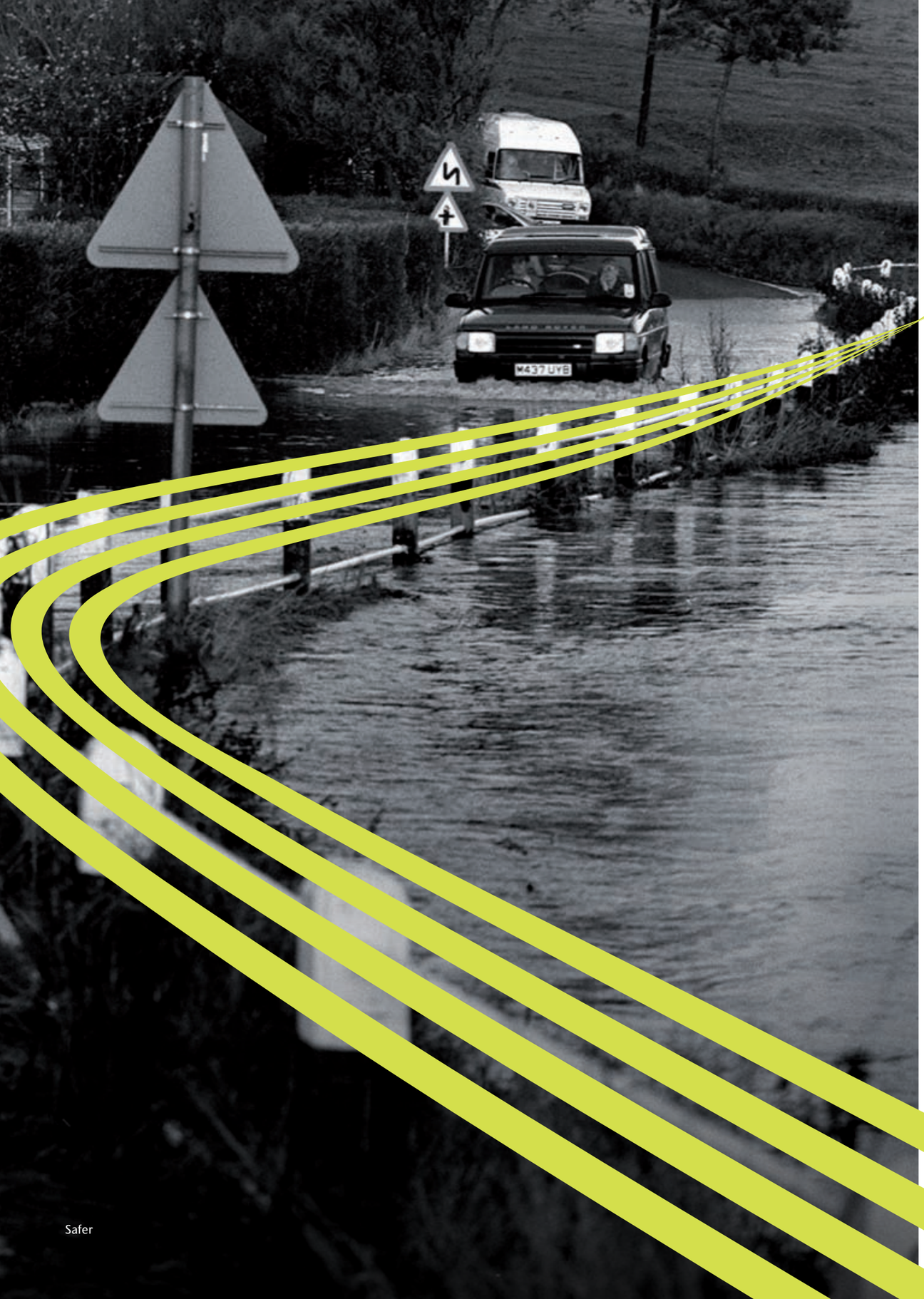
If you have any questions about your forecast, or simply want to keep in touch with changing weather conditions on marginal nights, then our team of road forecasters is just a phone call away.

WARNINGS AND STATISTICS

Wind and rainfall warnings, seasonal statistics, year on year comparisons, verification data and ad hoc reports on specific weather events are also available from the Met Office.

"The new web-based route forecasting takes OpenRoad to a new level. The interface is innovative, powerful and effective – a must-have tool for any decision-maker.'

Chris Cranston
Operations and Communications Manager
Devon County Council



Understanding the weather takes practise

Our certified courses are designed to help you increase your knowledge of the weather so that you can better understand our OpenRoad forecasts, plan questions for your forecaster and feel confident about the decisions you make.

All our courses are delivered through the world-renowned Met Office College by ex-road forecasters with in-depth knowledge of your industry and the unique weather challenges it faces.

Courses are held at the Met Office locations across the UK or at your premises. Our training is highly respected and we offer a range of interactive courses from basic to advanced level.

"Clear, concise and very good delivery."

Damian Chang
Mouchel Parkman

We can help you prepare for the effects of climate change

While milder winters in the UK may mitigate some of the effects of snow, ice and frost on the roads, climate change presents new challenges for the road industry.

Even a small rise in temperature, possible in the UK in the next 20 years, could mean more torrential downpours like the ones we experienced in summer 2007 that led to widespread flooding. Heatwaves, droughts and other forms of extreme weather are expected more often as our climate changes.

We can tell you what's happening and how it will affect the roads in your area.

We can help you understand the risks by providing:

- seasonal forecasts to help you plan for the months ahead;
- guidance on the effects of climate change on resources – staff, gritters, salt and other materials – and on your infrastructure;
- advice on sustainability through longer term contracts;
- direction at the design stage of new roads to ensure safety and longevity, including the effects of wind, fog, drainage, land slips and cold air pooling.

"Thank you for the timely snow warning on the weekend of 1st February 2008. It allowed AmeyMouchel, acting on behalf of the Highways Agency in Area 13, to allocate resources and take prompt action on the A66 Stanimore to minimise delays and ensure public safety."

Kevin Clague,
Operations Manager,
AmeyMouchel (Area 13)

Consultancy

Contact us today

For more information please email us at openroad@metoffice.gov.uk or call 0870 900 0100.

Act now!